

Lesson plan advisory classes or a workshop

1. General information:

Anna Guzy

Interdyscyplinarne Centrum Badań nad Edukacją Humanistyczną

A lesson plan for advisory classes for elementary students grade 4–6.

Length of the lesson: 2 lesson units¹



Source: *Grafika MS Office*

2. Topic: How to take care of ourselves and the Earth?

3. Subject justification and key words

There are two main objectives of the classes: preventive, associated with expanding the resources of coping strategies in a stressful situation, and implementing the development of the attitude of responsibility for oneself and one's own actions, as well as responsibility for the Earth

¹ It is possible to perform the whole topic as a 1,5 h workshop or it can be divided into two separate meetings.

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The lesson is proposed to be one of the series which is preceded by the classes related to the idea of stress and stressors, and the classes connected with the natural disasters topic as well.

5. Objectives:

- a student individually or in a group shares information about the ways of coping with stress or tension,
- a student consolidates knowledge on the symptoms of stress and stress reaction,
- a student understands the idea and sources of stress
- a student is able to indicate the examples of constructive and harmful ways of coping with stress or tension,
- a student works in group actively, expresses his opinions,
- a student learns a new ways of relaxation techniques, mindfulness technique in particular,
- a student develops an attitude of responsibility for himself and his health,
- a student develops the feeling of efficiency and influence,
- a student develops an attitude of concern for the Earth,
- a students knows the eco-friendly activities, i.e. waste segregation, water saving, the usage of reusable packaging etc.
- a student understands the legitimacy of using a variety of eco-friendly activities.

6. Methods

- expository method
- inquiry method
- active learning, brainstorm, psychodrama.

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7. Forms of work

- collective,
- small groups.

8. Materials, resources and teaching aids

- sheets of white paper/ a board
- colourful markers
- colourful scarfs,
- a recording of mindfulness to play in any available form (a CD player, computer, telephone etc.)
- sleeping pads or blankets in case of desire to do the exercises while lying down,
- worksheet.

9. References

1. W. Mark, P. Danny, *Mindfulness. Training.* [Mindfulness. Trening uważności] Tłum. K. Zimnoch. Samo Sedno, Warszawa 2014.
2. E. Snel, *Mindfulness and a peace of a frog.* [Uważność i spokój żabki] Tłum. M. Falkiewicz. CoJaNaTo, Warszawa 2016.
3. E. Snel. *My superpower.* [Moja supermoc] *Mindfulness and a peace of a frog.* [Uważność i spokój żabki] *Mindfulness histories, games and plays.* [Historie, gry i zabawy mindfulness] Tłum. B. Łyszkowska. CoJaNaTo, Warszawa 2018.
4. The source of pictures: Grafika MS Office.

10. Learning procedure

1. Motivational and problematic situation – introducing Kasia – stressed character.
2. Pair work. Answering questions.
3. Group work. Brainstorm – ways of coping with stress.

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4. A joint summary of techniques and strategies gathered by the students.
5. Mindfulness – introduction and basic information.
6. Attentive breathing meditation – exercise. Exercise evaluation.
7. Summary².
8. Motivational and problematic situation – introduction of Gaia.
9. Pair work. Answering questions from the worksheet.
10. Team work. Brainstorming.
11. Team work summary.
12. Drama exercises: living picture.
13. Completing the worksheet: exercise no 2.
14. A discussion about the possibilities and efficiency. Completing exercise 3 from the worksheet: *Make a commitment*.
15. Summing up and the end of the classes.

11. Learning Procedure

At the beginning of the classes the teacher ask the students to listen to a short story.³:

Today, I would like to tell you about Kasia. She is 6th grade student at elementary school. Yesterday she had a math test and she is almost sure that it didn't go as well as she would like it to go. It is very important to her to have a good grade in math. Since she has got back home from school she is very nervous. She got stomachache from stress, she is sad, because she worries she didn't do well and she will get bad grade. She can't focus on anything. The lack of

² If the lesson plan is divided into two separate lesson units, it is time here to summarize and consolidate new information, in particular the ways of dealing in stressful situation.

³ It is just a suggestion. The teacher can use a different story as well as the one suggested in the description. The example of situation when it's difficult for someone to deal with the stress and emotions is crucial for the description. Moreover it's worth to point out few symptoms related to stress (for example: cognitive or behavioral), in order to recall some theoretical information related to a stress response.





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energy makes almost impossible for her to get ready for the tomorrow's classes. She can't sleep. Some bad thoughts appear in her head.

After reading the text the students work in pairs (the teacher can group the students in any possible way) Their task is to answer the questions.

- Have you ever been in similar situation⁴?
- How does Kasia feel?
- What kind of stress symptoms does she have?

It takes approximately 5 minutes to work in pairs. After that time the students work together. You can also ask student to rise a hand if they want to answer the sample questions: *Have you ever been worried about bad test's results or because of a grade? Have you ever felt stressed? Have you ever had similar symptoms related to stress for example: stomachache, sleeping problems, distraction etc*⁵.

The teacher rewards students for being active and suggests further task.

Ask students to write on a sheet of paper (attachment no 1⁶) as many ways as possible which can be helpful when somebody feel stressed/ those kind of actions, which can help Kasia.

This time the class works with the brainstorming method in a groups of 4⁷ (to complete the task the students have approx. 5 minutes). Encourage them to make some non-linear notes, to include some associations, sketches, drawings etc. When the time is up, gather the worksheets

⁴ Remind the students about the voluntary principle in terms of sharing their own experience. In case of gathering the answers only willing students speak up. If it's difficult to get the answer, the teacher can share his own experience.

⁵ It is worth to add some other symptoms, for example muscle tension, clenching the jaws etc.

⁶ Encourage the students make notes on the worksheet of the suggestions that were mentioned.

⁷ If it's possible, ask the students sitting next to each other to turn so that they can see their faces.



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and then spread them to the different groups so that they can write down those suggestions that haven't been included on the previous sheets. To do the task give the students 5 more minutes⁸.

Sum up the team work (the teacher writes down the answers on a board/ on a piece of paper or he asks different students to do it. It is good idea to divide the answers into two groups: helpful and unhelpful methods of coping with stress)⁹. If the word: relaxation or mindfulness appeared among the answers we refer to them¹⁰.

If the students have already learnt about different methods of relaxation we refer to their knowledge, if no, we tell them that they are going to learn about the most efficient techniques of stress reduction, which are based of mindfulness¹¹.

We invite the students to do the exercise (the recording lasts for about 7 minutes): attentive breathing meditation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJuLA6lOz1I>¹³ (the beginning of the actual relaxation part - from 1:55 till 9:08). It is very important to make sure it is calm and quiet while exercising. It can be done both ways: sitting by the table or lying down (if there is such a possibility and we have prepared some suitable blankets).

Sum up the exercise. Ask the students: *How did they feel? Do they think that the attentive breathing meditation can help to reduce stress and tension? Would they like to do the exercise again?* We ask students, when is it worth doing such an exercise¹⁴?

⁸ Depending on the dynamic of the work and the size of the groups one more turn can be taken. The exercise can be also done without changing the worksheets, you can extend the time till 10 minutes instead.

⁹ If the students name a lot of destructive ways of dealing with stress, it is worth to conduct one more, additional preventive and educational lesson on this topic.

¹⁰ We can also ask the student, who answered this way if he could tell something more about it or you can also start talking first.

¹¹ The teacher introduces briefly J. Kabat-Zinn the creator of trainings and the popularizer of this form of meditation.

¹³ There are different types of recordings available. I suggest to choose the one, which is designed for the children.

¹⁴ If we plan one unit lesson it is now the time for a longer summary. We can ask students in smaller groups for example 4 people, to share information about which ways of dealing with stress, in their opinion, are the most efficient and why.

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Next, it's time to sum up this part of lesson, now we can use so-called "the round" instead of traditional summary. Each student during "the round" (on a voluntary basis) shares his feelings after this part of lesson, mindfulness exercises. We can also suggest the students to create an image of the feeling, that accompanied them in the end of the classes, using their bodies¹⁵.

The end of the first lesson. The next lesson takes place either during following classes or next week.

The teacher informs the students that, apart from Kasia, he would like to introduce them to another heroine of today's classes, Gaja¹⁶. He reads a short description:

I'm about 4,5 billion years old. What I see now, makes me worried and stressed more and more. I run out of balance, I feel either very hot or very cold. The air is no longer as clear and bright as it used to be. It looks like a coal. I suffocate almost every day. I'm tossed by typhoons and hurricanes, I'm flooded by the water the sun is burning me. I'm often very thirsty. I'm in a drought. I can see that fewer and fewer beautiful plants and majestic animals surrounds me. What I can see instead are piles of plastic that floods me. Soon I won't be able to see anything...anyone. I'm worried about what I'll see tomorrow, in a year, in 10 years time, in 100 years...

We move on to a pair work and we ask students to answer those questions: *What do you think, is the heroine of this short description? Why do you think Gaja is hurt, sad and stressed?*

The teacher rewards students for being active and he suggests further task. Ask them to write on a piece of paper (attachment no 2) as many actions as possible (both, actions that students can do themselves, and any other that they can think of) that prevent Gaja from being sad and stressed (work with brainstorming method in a groups of 4; there are about 5 minutes to complete the task). When the time is up, gather the worksheets and then spread them to the

¹⁵ When there is more time you can suggest both ways of summarizing.

¹⁶ When the lesson takes place after a week, it is necessary to refer to the story which was read during the previous lesson in terms of efficiency problem and the ways of dealing with stress.



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different groups so that they can write down those suggestions that haven't been included on the previous sheets. To do the task give the students 5 more minutes¹⁷.

Sum up the team work. The teacher asks students to share the answers, that he writes on a board afterwards.

The teacher invites students, one by one, to do the exercise with a drama method: living picture. He divides the class into 4 groups¹⁸. Their task is to create a living picture of two different sculptures of Gaja- The Earth: the first one is the one she is the same like in the description which was read at the beginning of the lesson, and the second that shows how many great ideas do the students have to make Gaja feel better¹⁹.

They can use colorful scarves brought by the teacher or other materials, which can be found in the classroom to do the presentation. The students have about 5-7 minutes to prepare the presentation.

Then the sculptures created by the students in groups are presented. If the students were asked to come up with the title of the sculpture, ask the students from the other groups to give it a name or to guess the title of the sculpture presented by the different group. Reward students for being active and for their involvement, thank them for participating in the exercises. Ask the students to sit by their tables. Sum up shortly drama exercise and ask the students how did they feel while doing it? Ask students to do exercise no. 2 and then exercise no. 3 from the worksheet.

Distribute two pieces of paper to each student, so that they can write down the commitments they are going to make in terms of taking care of themselves and the Earth. Take part in this exercise as well. To sum up, ask the students to stand in a circle. Ask them to read their self-care commitments out loud. The teacher reads first, for example: *I promise to sleep*

¹⁷ Depending on the dynamic of the work and the size of the groups one more turn can be taken. The exercise can be also done without changing the worksheets, you can extend the time till 10 minutes instead.

¹⁸ When the class is bigger you can divide the students into bigger number of groups of 4 to 7 people.

¹⁹ You can also ask the groups to give the sculptures the name.



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more and rest. Ask the student, who stands on your right side (if the exercise takes place in a circle) or a student who sits at the first table, to react: ***That's a great idea! It's the first step to take care of yourself! You can do it!***²⁰ After a round ask the students to read the commitment concerning the Earth. The teacher starts, for example: I promise not to waste water and check if all the faucets are off. The students react: ***That's a great idea! It's the first step to take care²¹ of the Earth! You have great influence on it!***

The teacher ends the classes with the words: *You have a lot of really great ideas, how to take care of you and the Earth. You have the power to do it! Fingers crossed for Your commitment!*²²

12. Attachments

Attachment 1

Ways of dealing with stress

²⁰ It's good idea to write the sentences on the board. You can also find it at the end of the worksheet

²¹ In Polish, when we talk to a teacher we use Miss/Mister form.

²² The teacher can encourage the students to hang their slips of paper on the wall, so that it would be easier for them to fulfil the task.

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Attachment 2

How can Gaja be helped?

Worksheet

1. Ways of dealing in a stressful situation

Ways of dealing with stress

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2. During the classes you’ ve learned how to take care of yourself and the Earth. Complete the chart with the ways/ actions/ suggestions, which, in your opinion, seems to be the most efficient. Maybe some other ideas will occur to you later, write them down anytime you want.

How to take care of myself?	How to take care of the Earth?
	

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3. Make a commitment. Your every action leads to consequences. You've got an impact on yourself and the world that surrounds you. As a summary of our classes write down in the clouds below, how will you be able to take a better care of yourself and the earth?

I promise to act, to take care of myself. The first step is

I promise to act, to take care of the Earth. The first step is

Its a great idea! It's the first step to take care of you! You can do it!

It's a very good idea! It's the first step, to take care of the Earth! You have a great influence on it!

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